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### THE CIA'S DEFENSELESS BACK

WE ARE SEEING RESUMED AGAIN, A FASHIONABLE NATIONAL PASTTIME WHICH MIGHT FOR LACK OF A BETTER DESCRIPTION BE CALLED THE ART OF CIA BAITING. THIS IS WHERE WHENEVER ANYTHING GOES SOUR IN THE COUNTRY'S FOREIGN OPERATIONS, ESPECIALLY IN THE SMALLER NATIONS, THEN CHARGE IT UP TO THE BUNGLING OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

IT IS RATHER TRAGIC SINCE THESE REPORTS, ALWAYS GOOD NEWS COPY, ARE CHARACTERISTICALLY SPAWNED, NOT UNDER THE HAND OF INFORMED REPORTERS, BUT THE HEAVY HANDED IGNORANCE OF A FEW COLUMNISTS AND CONGRESSMEN AGAINST WHOM THIS TOP LEVEL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY CANNOT AND INDEED SHOULD NOT DEFEND ITSELF. AND EACH WAVE OF ATTACKS INEVITABLY BRINGS A NEW DEMAND FOR A CONGRESSIONAL WATCHDOG COMMITTEE OVER THE CIA -- SOMETHING FAILING TO RECOGNIZE THE COMPETENCE OF HOUSE AND SENATE MEMBERS ALREADY ASSIGNED TO QUIETLY OVERSEE THE AGENCY.

A GRIM IRONY OF THESE SPORADIC, HARD HITTING ATTACKS ON THE CIA IS THAT THEY PLAY THE GAME OF A SPECIAL RUSSIAN SECRET POLICE BUREAU IN MOSCOW WHOSE TASK IT IS TO DO EXACTLY THIS JOB -- DISCREDIT THE AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE AGENCY BOTH OVERSEAS AND IN THIS COUNTRY IN ORDER TO FORCE LIMITATIONS ON ITS OPERATIONS.

WHAT MUST BE ACCEPTED BY THE RESPONSIBLE PRESS AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCH IS THAT FOR EVERY BAY OF PIGS FAILURE THE CIA PROBABLY HAS A THOUSAND SMALLER AND SOME LARGER SUCCESSES -- IF WE KNEW WHAT THESE WERE, THEN THE CIA WOULD NOT BE DOING ITS JOB -- INDEED COULD NOT DO ITS JOB.

THE OVERRIDING FACT IS THAT OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY HAS PULLED TOGETHER PROBABLY THE SINGLE TOUGHEST, MOST BRILLIANT AND DEDICATED GROUP OF PEOPLE IN ANY U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCY. UNIQUELY THEY WORK WITHOUT RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT EVEN FROM THEIR FAMILIES, AND OFTEN AT IMMENSE PERSONAL RISK. THERE ARE FEW REWARDS, NO WHITE HOUSE AWARD CEREMONIES TO RECOGNIZE EVEN THE GREAT SUCCESSES.

THIS IS NOT TO EXCUSE FAILURE, BUT SIMPLY TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE NATURE OF CIA'S WORK -- WHERE THE ULTIMATE DEMAND IS FOR SILENCE NOT EASY FOR THE AMERICAN OPEN DOOR WAY TO ACCEPT AND WHERE THERE MUST EXIST A SPECIAL CONFIDENCE IN THE PRESIDENT TO BE THE BEST AND FINAL JUDGE OF THE AGENCY'S EFFECTIVENESS.